

Water Meter FAQ

Why is there a need for water meters?

All City of Fresno water customers are required to have water meters installed and billed a metered rate by 2013. Water meters are a requirement of AB 514 (2003), which requires all users of Federal Central Valley Project (CVP) water to install water meters and bill a metered rate. It is also a requirement of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation as part of the City's CVP contract renewal. The City contracts for 60,000 acre feet of CVP water annually, representing approximately 30% of Fresno's water supply.

Will I be charged a metered rate?

Volunteer Study participants will not be charged a metered rate during the 12-month study. They will pay their normal flat rate water bill. Participants *will* receive regular meter readings which will include the actual gallons of water consumed at their residence.

What's the purpose of the Volunteer Study?

The Volunteer Study will give valuable information to customers about their water usage and water waste. Volunteers will be representative of a cross section of the community, and will be recruited from each City Council district. During the yearlong study, efforts will be made to encourage the fixing of leaks, and to educate the public about ways in which they can conserve water to keep their utility bills down. Volunteers will NOT be charged the metered rate during the study.

How will you select the homes for the Volunteer Study?

We will recruit up to 10 homes from each of the seven City Council districts for a maximum of 70 volunteers. All interested participants must fill out a questionnaire, which will provide the City with detailed information that will be used to select the volunteers that clearly represent a cross section of the City. We want to make sure people from all walks of life – from large lots to small lots, lots with pools and lots without pools – are included.

How long is the process?

The Volunteer Study is a 12-month process that will begin on January 1, 2009 and will be completed on December 31 2009.

What are you doing with the information?

The Volunteer Study will show how residents respond when they're given accurate and updated information about their water consumption and water waste. The data collected through the Volunteer Study, such as water usage and the associated rate, will be packaged and shared with local media in an effort to help the general public learn more about their water usage.

Will I be on TV or contacted by a reporter from The Fresno Bee?

It's a possibility. Because we will be sharing data with the local media, it is likely they will want to interview Volunteer Study participants for their perspective. We will not give your personal information to the media without contacting you first.

How often will the Water Division be at my home to read the meter?

Water Division personnel may be on site at least once a month during a 12-month period.

When the Water Division comes to install my meter will they just come onto my property whenever they want?

No. You will be notified 48 hours in advance via a door hanger. Additionally, we will need to shut off your water for a very short period of time when we install your meter. We will make every effort possible to inform you of any service interruption.

What's in it for me?

Knowledge. Volunteer Study participants will be at the forefront of the transition to metered rates. You will be able to make changes on your water consumption and repair leaks before you are charged a metered rate. Additionally, you will be helping the rest of the community.

Will you need to remove any of my shrubs or bushes in the process of putting in the meter?

City of Fresno Water Division personnel will make every attempt to be as noninvasive to your yard as possible. Additionally, we will make every effort to communicate with property owners to inform them when we will be on their property.

Don't I already have a water meter?

As of January 1, 1992, California law required all new services to include a water meter. If your house was built in 1992 or after, there is a high probability that you have a water meter at your property. If you are chosen for the study, you will receive a newer Automatic Read Meter.

How do I know where my meter is located?

The location of your meter depends on the location of your water service shut off line. Look for the water service box near your property line at the front of your home. If there is a meter it should be inside that box. Not all water mains are in the street, some are located in the backyard easements or alleys.

Will the meters installed for the Volunteer Study be the same meters the City will eventually install?

No, the meters installed for the Volunteer Study will be removed at the end of the 12-month period.

What if I find a leak?

Participating in the Volunteer Study is a great opportunity for folks because it's better to find out about leaks and repair them before you are charged a metered rate. Contact Water Conservation at 621-5480 for a free leak survey.

Can I get out of this if I don't like it?

The City of Fresno is counting on you to commit to the study for a full year to obtain the necessary information. You will be able to opt out if necessary.